




Mission Settlement


3


 Grade Level: 7


 Subject Area:
Social Studies

 Duration:
Pre-visit: 1 hour
Visit: 1 day
Post-visit: 1 hour

 Setting:
Classroom and Mission

 Skills:
7.8A Create charts representing various aspects of Texas history
7.21C Organize and interpret information from charts

 Charting the Course:
Students should have an understanding of the divisions of mission community life as presented in the chart (i.e. prior to mission system, mission community, after secularization, and modern community). They should also have been exposed to the *acequia* system and what it entails.

 Essential Terms:
secularize, community, *acequia*

CHANGE OVER TIME

Big Idea
How have the population of the missions and the use of their water systems changed over time?

Objectives

Students will:

- ◆ Identify and record evidence of the mission's inhabitants and their water usage
- ◆ Analyze their evidence for common threads and possible conclusions

Making Connections

The missions were founded as a part of a three-prong plan for colonization by the Spanish. This also included settlers who emigrated from Spain and the military who occupied the presidio.

The missions were designed to be mostly self-sufficient communities which would help change indigenous people into Spanish citizens. The conversion was not merely religious, but because Spain was a Catholic monarchy, it was integral to their efforts. In the event of intrusion by other Europeans, notably

the French, it was hoped that these new citizens would defend Spain's territorial claims. It was equally essential that the mission inhabitants learn skills that would enable them to provide a living for themselves in their new environment. This led to the construction of permanent buildings and *acequia* (irrigation) systems.

Many textbooks today argue that the plan for Spanish colonization, which included the mission system, was a failure. This is due, in part, to the fact that the missions were later secularized and, in some cases, the churches abandoned. What many fail to recognize is that the secularization of the missions was Spain's ultimate goal. Ideally, missions would exist for only ten years.

It should also be noted that buildings, parts of the *acequia* system, and a rich Catholic community are still in evidence at today's mission sites. In truth, it can be answered that the Mission Indians did not disappear, but can be seen in the faces of those in the surrounding community who are their descendants.

Materials

Exploration (pre-visit):

- ♦ video "Gente de Razón" available from San Antonio Missions National Historical Park

Elaboration (visit):
(one per group)

- ♦ "Evidence of the Mission's Inhabitants and Water Usage" chart

Engagement (Pre-visit):

Ask students to hypothesize about what happened to the Mission Indians. Write responses on the board.

Exploration (Pre-visit):

The video can be viewed on site at the Visitors' Center at San José, but it is recommended to be used pre-visit.

1. Watch the video "Gente de Razón" available from San Antonio Missions National Historical Park.

2. Look back over responses and discuss additional information from video.

Alternative: The time line may be substituted for Exploration or Explanation, or used in

addition to the activities outlined. It is recommended that each student receive one part of the time line to illustrate. Standing in the time line, the students can then read their part and show their picture.

Explanation (Pre-visit):

Indigenous people under the supervision of Franciscan friars became the first inhabitants of missions. They dug an extensive *acequia* system used to irrigate crops, and constructed buildings. For a period of 50 - 60 years the missions prospered. Towards the end of the 1700s the missions were partially secularized with only the churches remaining active. The remaining Mission Indians received a parcel of land as their own.

The early 1800s was a period of unrest. Mission lands not distributed at the time of secularization were rented, leased or sold to townspeople and retired soldiers from the presidio. By 1824, under the Republic of Mexico, the missions were fully secularized.

From the 1850s-1900s various Catholic religious orders took charge of the mission churches. Local inhabitants included Hispanic, Alsatian, German, Irish, and Italian settlers.

By the mid-1900s Franciscans had returned to four of the mission churches.

Under an array of local organizations and government agencies, restoration projects in varying degrees of completion could be seen at the missions.

In 1978, Missions Concepción, San José, San Juan, and Espada became San Antonio Missions National Historical Park. The National Park Service, through cooperative agreements with the State of Texas and the Archdiocese of San Antonio, began full time management of the four missions while maintaining separation of church and state.

Elaboration (Visit):

Students will work in groups of three to record evidence of the mission's inhabitants and their water usage. A chart is provided.

* If Mission San Juan is visited, the Tufa House should be highlighted. Named for the tufaceous limestone from which it is built, the Tufa House was built circa 1820s-1850s with rubble from the original compound. The house itself is located on the foundation site of an original dwelling of possible colonial era rooms and was occupied as late as the 1960s. The Tufa House serves both as an excellent example of a post-colonial home and the continuity of community in the Missions.

Elaboration (Post-Visit):

As a class, share and discuss the students' findings. It is helpful if the teacher provides a large chart on the board or overhead to consolidate their findings.

Possible Conclusions:

1. The buildings, *acequia* system, and church and its religion are three constants that

began in the Mission period and still exist today.

2. There is little evidence of the secularized period. This is because during restoration most of it was removed.

3. There is evidence of water usage across the ages: *acequia*, well, and running water (flush toilets, etc.).

4. Mission Indians did not disappear, but can be seen in the faces of their descendants in the community.

Notes:

Evidence of San Antonio Mission's Inhabitants and Their Water Usage

Prior To Mission System (prior to 1680)	Mission Community (1680 – 1800)	Community After Secularization (1824 – 1900s)	Modern Community (1920s - Present)